

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A plasma processing method in which plasma is generated by the use of a plasma excitation gas and process gas is introduced into said plasma to thereby process an object to be processed, ~~said plasma processing method being characterized in that said process gas includes nitrous oxide gas and said~~ the method comprising:

~~nitrous oxide gas is introduced into the plasma whose electron temperature is less than binding energy 2.24 eV between a nitrogen molecule and an oxygen atom in said nitrous oxide; and~~

~~characterized by~~ introducing said plasma excitation gas into a process chamber from an upper shower plate[[,]];

generating said plasma under said upper shower plate[[,]];

causing said plasma to pass through a lower shower plate provided under said upper shower plate so as to reach said object to be processed[[,]]; and

introducing said nitrous oxide gas, as said process gas, from said lower shower plate into the plasma whose electron temperature is less than binding energy 2.24 eV between a nitrogen molecule and an oxygen atom in said nitrous oxide, said nitrous oxide gas being introduced into the plasma under said lower shower plate,

wherein said nitrous oxide gas is provided to said lower shower plate from a gas discharge tube provided at only one end of said lower shower plate, to thereby be discharged through respective openings of said lower shower plate into the process chamber.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Currently Amended) A method for manufacturing an electronic device, ~~characterized by~~ further comprising a step of carrying out an oxynitriding process to said object to be processed by the use of the plasma processing method according to claim 1.

4. (Canceled).

5. (New) The plasma processing method according to claim 1, wherein the respective openings of said lower shower plate are square-shaped openings.

6. (New) The plasma processing method according to claim 1, further comprising:
providing microwave radiation into a top portion of the process chamber by way of a radial
line slot antenna.